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NSC BRIEFING

13 March 1957

BACKGROUND - GAZA SITUATION

EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI GENERAL ARMISTICE AGREEMENT

Rhodes, 24 February 1949

Article V

1. The line described in Article VI of this Agreement shall be designated as the Armistice Demarcation Line and is delineated in pursuance of the purpose and intent of the resolutions of the Security Council of 4 and 16 November 1948.

2. The Armistice Demarcation Line is not to be construed in any sense as a political or territorial boundary, and is delineated without prejudice to rights, claims and positions of either Party to the Armistice as regards ultimate settlement of the Palestine question.

3. The basic purpose of the Armistice Demarcation Line is to delineate the line beyond which the armed forces of the respective Parties shall not move except as provided in Article III of this Agreement.

4. Rules and regulations of the armed forces of the Parties, which prohibit civilians from crossing the fighting lines or entering the area between the lines, shall remain in effect after the signing of this Agreement with application to the Armistice Demarcation Line defined in Article VI.

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Article VI

1. In the GAZA-RAFAH area the Armistice Demarcation Line shall be delineated in paragraph 2B (1) of the Memorandum of 13 November 1948 on the implementation of the Security Council resolution of 4 November 1948, namely by a line from the coast at the mouth of the Wadi Nasi in an easterly direction through Deir Suseid and across the Gaza-Al Hajdal Highway to a point 3 kilometers east of the Highway, then in a southerly direction parallel to the Gaza-Al Hajdal Highway, and continuing thus to the Egyptian frontier.

2. Within this line Egyptian forces shall nowhere advance beyond their present positions, and this shall include Beit Hanun and its surrounding area from which Israeli forces shall be withdrawn to north of the Armistice Demarcation Line, and any other positions within the line delineated in paragraph 1 which shall be evacuated by Israeli forces as set forth in paragraph 3. (Remainder of text irrelevant)

NOTE: Article VI paragraph 1 delineates the Gaza strip. Egypt has never annexed the Strip, although it appointed civil and military governors there. Cairo has maintained with varying emphasis the fiction that the legal government of the Gaza territory is a provisional government

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of Arab Palestine. Aside from members of this "government" who resided in Cairo, the only substance attached to it was the Palestine National Guard, a force which Egypt raised so that the number of Egyptian troops in the militarily indefensible strip could be kept at a minimum.

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